

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

August 11, 2005
10:00 a.m.

Crowne Plaza Richmond

Members Present: John Howell
Linda Cage
Shannon Williams
Roger Wiley

Members absent: David Ogburn

Staff Present: Steve Marzolf, Coordinator
Dorothy Spears-Dean, Analyst
Sam Keys, Analyst
Terry Mayo, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Howell, Chairman, called the meeting of the Legislative Committee to order at 10:00 AM.

INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Howell asked the committee members to introduce themselves to the audience. Also, after which, the audience introduced themselves to the committee members.

COMMITTEE BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Mr. Marzolf presented to the public and committee members a background and overview of the Board's direction and the purpose of the Legislative Committee.

Mr. Marzolf informed the committee that the E911 Wireless Service Board (the Board) is required by code to provide an annual report to the General Assembly, which includes a requirement to address the need for wireless E-911 legislation. In the past, the Board has expanded this requirement to include recommendations for legislative change that went beyond just wireless issues. During last year's annual report preparation, Mr. Marzolf recommended the Board consider recommending an expanded role for the Board into areas beyond wireless. Due to opposition at the time, the issue was tabled to be addressed as part of this year's annual report.

Mr. Marzolf presented what he believed were the gaps and shortcomings of the existing "system", which was the same presentation he made to the full Board in July. Also from

the presentation made to the full Board, Mr. Marzolf presented the guideline principles and future vision of E-911 in the Commonwealth that had been adopted by the Board as direction to the Committee. The guiding principles included:

- PSAPs are local services
- No unfunded mandates or standards
- Sufficient funding is needed to support PSAPs and network (current/future)
- E911 should be available to all who need it regardless of telecommunications devices
- Standards are needed to ensure consistent service levels and interoperability.

Mr. Howell commented that he thinks the guiding principles should include that the Board must anticipate and support what a caller expects to get from their service – the Board must understand what the customer needs and expects.

The future vision included:

- Continuation of locally managed and controlled PSAPs
- Integrated Public Safety network (moved together as the commonwealth)
 - IP-based, managed, secured
 - Layered with national, state and local components
 - State responsible for state layer
 - Shared with multiple applications (CAD, remote training, etc.)
- Next Generation E911
E911 as an application on the network
 - E911 application is technology neutral serving all technologies
 - Data is processed with the same ease as voice
 - Partnership between localities and state
 - PSAP Standards developed by PSAPs
- Funding provided to PSAPs for minimum required configuration
 - Technology neutral in collection and payment
 - Encouragement for efficient organizational/operation of PSAPs
 - Public education is a partnership between state and local agencies
- Anytime, anywhere, from any device the call is sent to the correct PSAP and processed rapidly.

Mr. Marzolf ended the overview by advising the committee that they were tasked with recommending specific steps and legislative language to achieve the direction from the Board. The committee will meet three times (August 16, September 1) to formulate the recommendations, which will be considered by the Board at their September 14, 2005 meeting.

DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Mr. Howell asked for questions. George Thomas – Chesterfield said that his concern was mandated PSAP consolidation. He also said that he felt the system may benefit from defining what constitutes a small and large PSAP. Mr. Marzolf responded that while the Board had discussed PSAP consolidation, this was during the discussion of PSAP funding and not as it related to the drafting of legislation.

Mr. Wiley raised concern about the implication that if the Board takes on the responsibility for wireline E-911 that the Board would also take over the wireline funding. He pointed out that taking in all of the E-911 funding centrally and redistributing it to more uses would not provide sufficient funding to the PSAPs.

Mr. Howell asked if the discussion of funding was not premature and whether the more fundamental question was whether there was a need in the Commonwealth to discuss IP and VoIP technology/services.

Tom Hanson of Charlottesville addressed the committee and said that last year the PSAPs opposed the legislative changes because of the concerns expressed by Mr. Wiley. He also mentioned the raiding of the funds last year and this year.

Mr. Howell said the committee needs to take a look and come up with a solution on ways to protect the fund, and then creating a way of looking into the future for new technologies, etc.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the current telecommunications taxation reform efforts with Mr. Marzolf providing an overview of the currently proposed legislation. Mr. Wiley suggested that the taxation legislation may make it easier to address some of the issues being addressed by the Board, but Mr. Marzolf recommended that any legislation proposed by the Board be totally separate and not reliant on the reform legislation passing. The suggestion was that the committee may want to consider how the taxation reform legislation could be improved to address 9-1-1 issues, but that the Board's legislation stand on it own.

Mr. Howell and Mr. Wiley postulated that addressing VoIP and IP without disturbing the existing wireline funding and network may be the most appropriate way of addressing many of the system gaps identified. Mr. Wiley suggested that regardless of other reforms that applying the \$0.75 surcharge to VoIP should be consider so that they are at least paying something toward E-911.

Mr. Howell attempted to summarize the points for discussion at the next meeting, but was reminded of the PSAP Standards issue, which had not yet been discussed. The brief discussion centered on whether it was appropriate for standards to be issued or simply best practices. The concern was that standards without an appropriate level of funding become unfunded mandates.

NEXT STEPS/FUTURE MEETING LOCATIONS

Mr. Howell summarized the discussion and goal for the next meeting by stating that the committee should recommend specific steps and possibly legislative language to:

- address VoIP and IP by giving the Board authority to address
- protect the fund and balance
- require VoIP to pay an E-911 surcharge
- address PSAP standards and/or best practices
- potentially leverage the Taxation Reform process

Mr. Marzolf informed the committee that David Ogburn will be at the next meeting. Mr. Ogburn is with Verizon and he could speak to the telecommunications taxation reform legislation.

The next Legislative Committee meeting will be held in Richmond on August 16, 2005, and the last meeting will be held in Charlottesville, Virginia on September 1, 2005.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Howell adjourned the meeting at 12:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry D. Mayo
Administrative Assistant
Public Safety Communications

Approved by subcommittee: _____
(date)